

Directions

*Hold
it. Warm
it with your own life.
Hold
it to your ear. Listen to its
near and far
pulse, the sounds, the
messages. Find out where
it was born:
the year, the time,
and who was there, and
why. Find out the nature
of its fear,
what cave or cliff or
curve
of tide has touched it,
tended it, nested it.
Find out what it can
know of parents, what
song and language it was
taught, and if it has a
friend,
an enemy; what stains
and bruises, marks
and cracks
distinguish it, what
surface opens to the air,
what inside-heart is
hiding
there, and learn
the way it breathes
and moves, the way it
feels the wind, the way
it warms itself, the
fire it knows, and
how
it moves upon
the earth.*



Elizabeth McKim